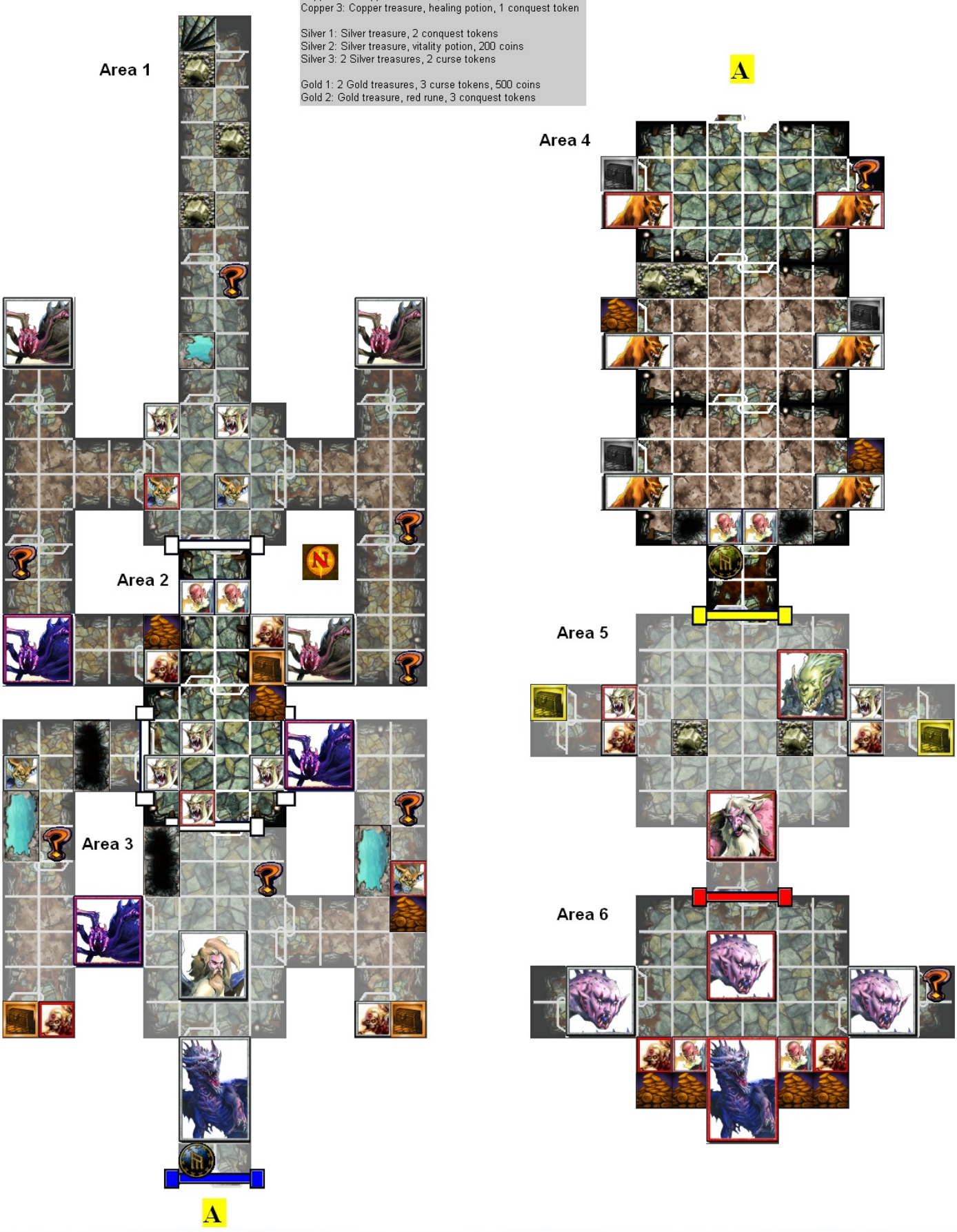
Dragonheart Quest

Chests
Copper 1: Copper treasure, healing potion, 1 conquest token
Copper 2: 2 Copper treasures, 100 coins, 1 curse token
Copper 3: Copper treasure, healing potion, 1 conquest token

Silver 1: Silver treasure, 2 conquest tokens
Silver 2: Silver treasure, vitality potion, 200 coins
Silver 3: 2 Silver treasures, 2 curse tokens

Gold 1: 2 Gold treasures, 3 curse tokens, 500 coins
Gold 2: Gold treasure, red rune, 3 conquest tokens



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Dragonheart

By Kelly Davies

Quest Background

Sitting in the common room of the Scythe and Sheaf inn, you are debating taking the six month caravan guard contract that Willem the spice merchant posted in the market square.
Kurgan, the burly old fighter who owns the Scythe and Sheaf, nods in mute agreement as you complain how much adventure in Veldra has dwindled during Queen Tabith's prosperous reign.
As you finish your latest diatribe, Kurgan gives you a measured look and leans in close. In a low voice, he tells you a tale he heard during the Usurper's War from an aged priest in the far north. The story tells of the ruined temple of the Twins in the Greyfrost Mountains where terrible monsters guard a fabulous jewel called the Dragonheart.

Quest Goals

After journeying for several weeks, you find the entrance to the underground temple of the Twins of The Necropolis: Elgar the Divine Judge and Rathgar the Final Justice. Along the way, you have collected stories of fearsome monsters and brave heroes who never returned. Common were sinister tales of foul sorcery and abomination that also named the Dragonheart as the "Stone of Khelgharak".
Your goal is to enter the temple and recover the fabled Dragonheart, preferably without joining the undead that are rumoured to populate the temple's catacombs.
You start with five conquest tokens. Good luck.

The heroes will not be able to return to town to equip so they will start with 500 gold instead of the usual 300 to spend on equipment. Heroes that exit the temple will return to camp (the town marker) for rest and resurrection, but they will not be able to buy or sell items in camp. Each hero may choose to exchange one original treasure from each treasure chest. A treasure card that allows the hero to draw again may not be exchanged.

Optional Rule: Heroes may compete against each other by collecting the most valuable items during the quest. If the heroes survive, the hero with the most value (based on gold and purchase cost of the hero's treasures, armor, and weapons). Each hero maintains his own pool of conquest tokens, starting with five each.

Area 1 - Upper Catacombs

The long tunnel sinking into the dark grey stone is dank and the air redolent of the decay of both stone and flesh. Shattered statuary lies in rubble along the walls. Distant torches flicker, and you can hear the rustling of leathery wings and and the scuffling of claws of the foul vanguard waiting in the catacombs for you.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker in the entrance to the catacombs:

Lying at your feet are the remains of one of the unfortunate heroes who proceeded you. Trapped underneath the dessicated corpse you find a healing potion.

If a hero ends his movement on an encounter marker in the western catacombs:

Years of desecration have left the dry bones of former heroes scattered throughout the catacombs. Among the shattered and trampled remains, you find a vitality potion meant to sustain the hero in the adventures of his afterlife.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker in the eastern catacombs:

Trapped in the dust and stones on the floor, you find the charred and torn remains of a single page that reads:

"...sent Ren ahead to scout ahead with the (unreadable) while Eberk, Cam and I fought off the tombs' vile guardian... (charred and blurred text) ...need the sword or all is lost... (missing piece) ...fire..."

Area 2 - Chamber of Heroes

What was once the receiving chamber of the remains of great heroes is now a defaced and ruined hall. Sorcerers and their beastly henchmen have obviously been waiting for you to join the long dead heroes.

Area 3 - Lower Catacombs

If the heroes enter through the center door:
In the crumbled main chamber of the lower catacombs squats a grotesque manticore, its poisonous tail flicking impatiently behind it. Behind the manticore is an even greater atrocity. Some evil necromancer has animated the skeleton of a greater dragon. The manticore hisses with a malevolent smile, "So you have come to die as all the rest. We will feast on your flesh and devour your bones." The manticore lunges forward.

If the heroes enter through the side doors:
The lower catacombs have obviously been the nesting grounds of the monstrous vermin that infest the temple's ruins. Shelves of once revered bones have been scattered maliciously. Some of the shelves, though, are ominously empty, and there are spider webs everywhere...

The dragon skeleton has the same statistics as a normal dragon except it has no breath weapon and cannot burn. Because of the enchantment laid upon the dragon's remains, it cannot abandon its guardianship of the lower catacombs and will not leave them to pursue the heroes.
If the dragon skeleton is defeated, the heroes earn three conquest tokens.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker in the western catacombs:

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Amid the debris of the long dead, you find the more recent remains of a mighty dwarven warrior, apparently torn apart by the monsters. In his broken possessions you find a healing potion.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker in the eastern catacombs:

Among the shards of bone littering the floor, you find a potion of vitality.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker in the main chamber:

Wedged deep in a crevice in a wall you find the remains of a diary. Most of the pages are either missing or burnt. The last scribbled page reads:

"There are too many. We cannot reach the sword and now the stone is gone. Yesterday, one of the necromancers killed Cam with a fireball. Only Eberk and I remain to try to fight our way out of this gateway to hell, but hope is gone. I write these last words in hopes that where we have failed, others may succeed. Only when the two are joined as one..."

There the page ends.

Area 4 - Death's Passage

This broad hall once displayed the soul's progression from death to the judgement of the afterlife with fantastic murals and frescoes and finely carved statues. The right side of the hall, though badly damaged by fire and vandals, illustrates the good and the righteous coming to death for their reward. The left side, remarkably undamaged, shows evil and vicious souls marching to their torment.
In niches on both sides of the hall stand cunningly carved stone hellhounds, snarling with ferocious malice. Two sorcerers standing guard at the far door look up at your entry.
The room smells of sulphur and hot stone.

Until the heroes have defeated the sorcerers, the stone hellhounds are statues that cannot move nor be attacked. However, at the beginning of the overlord's turn, the hellhound statues will all breath fire from their mouths directly across the hallway. The two master hellhounds at the south end do not have any special abilities as statues so heroes are not affected by auras.

If one of the heroes ends his movement along the encounter marker on the west wall:

At your feet are the charred remains of an unfortunate soul who was trapped in this hellish hallway. Searching carefully through his blackened backpack, you find a gleaming emerald the size of a robin's egg wrapped in parchment. Embedded somehow in the gem's clear green depths is a sigil of a set of scales balanced on the point of a sword.
Scrawled on the parchment you see the following passage:

"I have failed. They sacrificed themselves in hope that I could somehow slip in and steal the sword. That old priest only told us that we had to join them to destroy the great evil. Pelidommara grant me peace for there shall be no peace in this temple until the evil is cleansed."

Give the hero who finds the body the Touch of Death artifact rune to represent the Soul Gem. The gem cannot be discarded by the hero, although it can be given to another hero as a normal item transfer, and does not count as encumbrance in the number of items he can carry.

If the heroes defeat the two guard-sorcerers:

As the second sorcerer crumples to the ground, you hear the rumbling and grating of earth and stone that seems to get higher and higher until it sounds like the snarling of dogs. When you turn to survey the hall, a pack of six hellhounds has laid its glittering eyes on those who killed their masters.

Once the sorcerers are dead, the hellhounds are transformed to four normal hellhounds and two master hell hounds. The hellhounds have normal movements, attacks, and attributes; they can now be killed.

If the heroes defeat the pack of hellhounds:

The last hellhound erupts in brilliant orange flame as it is dispatched to the Abyssal plane where it was spawned. Again, you hear the rumbling of earth and stone but instead of getting higher, the sound seems to soften into the gurgling of running water. Two ornate stone basins carved into the floor by the north door fill with sparkling water as if from long dormant springs.
Tasting the water, you feel more than refreshed; you feel better. These must be healing springs whose magic was withheld by the taint of the evil you have just vanquished.

After the heroes have defeated the hellhounds and after reading the text above, replace the two pit markers by the north door with two similar water markers. These denote healing springs that the party can use to heal wounds. Each member of the party can only withdraw a number of healing potions equal to the number of potions they can carry or equip. If there are no healing potion markers available, consider the springs as empty until the heroes use at least one potion.

The heroes receive five conquest tokens.

Area 5 - The Altar

This was once the altar to the Twins, a place of serene communion with the divine. Now, it is anything but serene as a giant and an ogre stand menacingly over the ruins of the Twins' altar. Elgar's altar lays smashed to the floor on the left. Rathgar's altar is smeared with foul and vulgar symbols all but obscuring Rathgar's divine symbol, a sword. On Rathgar's altar rests a giant flashing ruby the size of a man's head encased in a shimmering crystal. You have found the Dragonheart at last!
The guardians advance...

The heroes cannot open the rune-locked door until both the giant and the ogre are dead, even if they have recovered the rune. The door is covered by an illusion of a rock face.

If the heroes attempt to retrieve the Dragonheart before defeating the giant and the ogre:

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You attempt to grasp the Dragonheart but your hands are repelled by the crystal surrounding the gem. There is sorcery afoot here.

If the heroes have defeated the giant and the ogre:

With a mighty bellow, the last of the monstrous guardians falls heavily to the floor. As it does, the shimmering crystal around the Dragonheart evaporates in a puff of brimstone. But as you reach to retrieve your hard won prize, your hands sweep through empty air. You realize it is an illusion and a trap!
A bellowing voice cries out, its bass notes sending small stones skittering along the floor, "Who dares to steal from the mighty Kelgharak?" You hear the sound of a distant door slamming. In the northern wall where the giant stood, an illusory curtain of rocks melts away to reveal a hidden door.

Once the heroes have defeated the giant and the ogre, they can now open the rune-locked door if they have the proper rune. However, close the rune-locked door at the south end of Area 4. The heroes cannot open that door again until Khelgharak is defeated.

The heroes receive five conquest tokens.

Area 6 - Khelgharak's Inner Sanctum

As you open the door to the inner sanctum, you are overwhelmed by the smell of serpents and rotting flesh. Squatting before you is a vast leprous white dragon with a cadre of necromancers standing at his feet. Nagas and lesser serpents slither in the room.
From the torn wings to the putrid empty eye socket to the oozing raw wounds in its chest, you can see that this dragon is animated by foul and corrupt magic. In one of the larger wounds, you can see a flash of brilliant ruby. This must be Khelgharak, and that stone is truly the dragon's heart.
Khelgharak bares his cruel yellow teeth in a mockery of a smile. "Ssso, new heroesss have come to guard my heart," he hisses. "Kill them all." The monsters attack.

Khelgharak has all the movement, attacks, and attributes of a master dragon. Khelgharak is alo a dragon-lich who can only be permanently wounded by the activated Soul Sword. Wounds dealt to Khelgharak by magic or any other weapon but the active Soul Sword are automatically healed at the beginning of the Overlord's next turn. Wounds dealt to Khelgharak by the activated Soul Sword are never healed.
If the heroes have cleansed Area 4 of the sorcerers and hellhounds, Khelgharak and his minions may not enter the area nor even open the door to the area. If the heroes leave the door open, the monsters can attack through the open door using ranged attacks.

If a hero ends his movement on the encounter marker:

Concealed in a pile of rocks, you spy something shining in the torchlight. As you push the rocks aside, you find a long, well-made steel sword. The sword is completely unadorned except for an empty setting where a jewel would be set in the pommel and a mark, a set of scales balanced on the point of a sword, engraved at the base of the blade.

The heroes have found the Soul Sword. Give the hero the Blade of Light artifact rune. The inactive Soul Sword has the same statistics as a regular sword and cannot permanently wound Khelgharak.

If a hero has both the Soul Gem and the Soul Sword in his possession:

You bring the Soul Gem out of the pouch on your belt, and as you move it closer to the Soul Sword, both gem and sword flicker with a verdant fire. The gem fits perfectly with a click into the empty setting in the Soul Sword's hilt. Green fire continues to lick the edges of the blade and a low humming can be heard.

The hero has activated the Soul Sword. Wounds dealt by the activated Soul Sword against Khelgharak are now permanent.

If the Khelgharak is "killed" by magic or any weapon but the activated Soul Sword:

With a mighty shout you, you vanquish Khelgharak. But even as the dragon's body falls to the floor, you are horrified by the sight of wounds closing and broken bones straightening. You involuntarily step back in terror as the dragon's remaining eye snaps open and glares murderously at you.

If Khelgharak is not killed by the activated Soul Sword, he will begin the next Overlord's turn with the number of wounds returned to him equal to the damage not dealt by the Soul Sword. For example, if Khelgharak has a total of 10 wounds possible and only three wounds are dealt by the active Soul Sword, Khelgharak will start the next turn with a maximum of seven wounds possible.

If Khelgharak is wounded by the activated Soul Sword:

Wielding the flickering Soul Sword, you strike the dragon hard and the sword sinks into the undead flesh eagerly. Green fire erupts from the wound, and Khelgharak roars with unaccustomed pain.

Each wound struck by the Soul Sword is permanent and not recovered by Khelgharak.

If Khelgharak is killed completely by the activated Soul Sword:

You bring the sword around in one last stroke and plunge it deep into Khelgharak's chest. Khelgharak's body is completely consumed in a silent explosion of green fire as a dragon-shaped grey cloud is pulled upward. The dragon's soul trembles and then dissipates as it rises. Khelgharak has at last met his divine judgement and final justice.
Once the flames have gone, you see a pile of white ash on the floor and gleaming in the center lies the Dragonheart. You have won!

Once Khelgharak has been killed by the active Soul Sword, the heroes have won.

The heroes receive six conquest tokens.

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